

# TOC H JOURNAL

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## *Vision*

ONE of those moralising stories which Victorian children had to swallow and learned to love was called *Eyes and No-Eyes*. In it two small boys, thus oddly named, went for the same country walk. The first had a delightful time, with a new bird or bush or beetle to admire at each moment, the second found it unutterably boring: "one saw mud, the other stars".

No-Eyes does not deserve the privilege of Toc H membership, though he sometimes wears our badge. For our very first job is to be awake, to watch and then to work, to see the world round us with fresh eyes, to notice things that other men miss, to take opportunities and even to make them. And our seeing has to be more than superficial—it has to penetrate into and beyond the first semblance, to discover that "behind the ebb and flow of things temporal stand the eternal realities". Sight then becomes 'vision', in a sense beyond the oculist's.

The pages that follow skip, as usual, from one subject to another. Look more closely and you will see that they have something in common, a unity in their great diversity. Tubby starts with tales of two boys, neither of them named No-Eyes. Then comes a remoter subject—the search for beauty living in the works of men long since dead. After that witness how brightly our *Main Resolution* can "flash upon the inward eye" of a blind man. And so the pages lead on—to the village unit that sees a need and fulfils it by the work of its hands, to seventeen men in Brazil, a few Scouts in Australia, boys in an English school, a tramp upon the road, a hospital bus. All these are drawn together on the same shining thread. The name of it is Vision.

# Bread Upon the Waters

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*Tenny's contribution to the final session of the Central Council on April 24 was a pair of striking stories from the history of Christ's Hospital, which he has here written down.*

TOCH finances, we are all aware, grew from the pawning of an Oxford Medal, which fetched £9 and bought a second-hand typewriter purchased by Musters from the firm he left when he first joined the staff in 1920. Every big thing was little at its birth. Birth begins growth, and growth begins decay. These are the facts which govern human life. If you look back into the earliest years in the most primitive Minute Book of great societies, you are amused at the items you discover. For instance, at the London Hospital there was a moment when the treasurer announced he had one shilling in the bank. Then there arose a member of the Board, who said he had great news for all his colleagues, for he had found somewhere a water-butt which he presented to the London Hospital!

Let me revert to the two stories told to me by T. E. Limmer, long ago the Clerk to the Ancient, Royal and Religious Foundation of Christ's Hospital.

## The Cobbler's Son

The School was very poor, and a small cobbler, who valued education, obtained admission for his little boy. The cobbler's booth was distant from Greyfriars, indeed almost adjacent to the Abbey. The small son trudged each day to Greyfriars and trudged back every night to his poor home; but the time came when this long double journey so strained his infant health that the poor cobbler decided to request Christ's Hospital to let him join the boys who lived at school. This was permitted, although the school itself was at the time impoverished for funds. The boy was not clever, but in those far off days boys went to school in solemn earnest; organised sport in schools—especially in London schools—was rare. After some years the little boy grew up, and the time came when he must leave the school and join his father and become a cobbler.

When he began on his apprenticeship he asked his father whether he could help him to make however small a contribution towards the huge financial responsibilities which threatened to engulf Christ's Hospital. His father no doubt smiled to himself—you need not blame him—but, outwardly serious, he asked his son's intention. What was his plan for helping his old school? The boy replied that during his apprenticeship he was prepared to promise that he would rise each working day an hour before he need be at his bench, and he would give the proceeds of that one extra hour towards Christ's Hospital in gratitude for all that they had done. The father thought that he would no doubt fail even to keep his promise. But he kept it; and for a year on every working day the boy rose a whole hour before the time when work was to begin. This extra hour was honourably paid for by his father, not with the pennies due to an apprentice, but at the full-fledged rate due to a man. He found the work well done upon the whole; it seemed that his small son had something in him. A year thus passed. Another year began, and still the boy went on with his endeavour. A small fund for Christ's Hospital accumulated, and the third year still further augmented the total.

### Token of Thanks

When finally the boy, now grown to manhood, completed his apprenticeship, the father presented him with five and twenty pounds, or something of the kind—no small sum in those days, which he had earned solely for Christ's Hospital. The son was by then naturally eager to take the sum in cash to his old school. The father had a touch of inspiration, and said, "Not so. Come, let us buy the field near to our home". Father and son went out and bought the field. The field presented to Christ's Hospital seemed unimportant until the nineteenth century. Guess where it is today! What stands upon it?

The sheet anchor of Christ's Hospital finance is that the school continues now to own most of the freeholds in Queen Anne's Gate. Queen Anne's Gate stands upon the very field



A SCHOLAR OF CHRIST'S HOSPITAL

*From an early 19th Century print*

bought by the cobbler with the fund earned by his son who loved Christ's Hospital.

It is not, therefore, only from the rich man's gift, one of a number, that the great societies are steadily financed from age to age. It is by contributions hardly earned and bestowed in utter thankfulness for benefits to mind and heart and soul of which a man remains, yes, at his zenith, devoutly conscious. His old fraternity (he knows) has made him, and he cannot fully repay that lifelong debt.

Critical letters to Toc H Headquarters and to myself are thankfully received, provided that the critic is constructive; but the thankful letters we frequently receive are sometimes couched in rather easy tones. One cannot help wondering whether all the writers are thoroughly prepared to put their thankfulness into the solid terms of a cash nexus, and to work hard and earn some extra shillings solely to bestow them on Toc H.

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Suffolk was once more bathed in the spring sunshine when an old gentleman who had come down to spend a fortnight in the village inn went for a stroll without an overcoat. The spring had overcome his caution as he sauntered far afield, and by this time a storm was brewing, which then broke on him. He blamed himself for his audacity, and, talking to himself, he prophesied chills and rheumatics if he left the shelter of a small group of over-arching trees. Leaves were not yet, and he began to find his shelter was illusory indeed. Then he perceived a boy in yellow stockings, with a peculiar thick and skirted coat trimmed with silver buttons, at his waist a belt, running towards him through the April downpour. When he arrived he made light of his run. He said that he had come up all the way from the old village inn and brought with him one of the newest and neatest recent inventions bestowed by science. This was none other than a great umbrella, then scarcely known even in London town, where the old man had merely heard of them and treated them with conservative contempt. But when a rainstorm comes on, and you are without an overcoat, modern inventions which protect your person are not to be despised.

I think the year must have been in the middle 'fifties of the eighteenth century. If you turn up umbrellas I fancy you will find that Jonas Hanway revived, but did not really introduce, the habit of umbrellas in Great Britain. Even among the hardy Anglo-Saxons there are some indications of their use. Far back in Egypt and Assyria, and on Greek vases, you may find umbrellas, but these were used for priests and royal persons rather than as protective to old gentlemen caught napping by a rainstorm in spring.

The boy with yellow stockings was not silent; and as they left the shelter of the trees, he modified his step to suit old age and held erect above the old man's head the large and clumsy instrument of comfort which he had brought with him.

### A Welcome Friendship

Thus on the homeward way a friendship formed. Friendship and confidence exhibited by schoolboys to old men is always welcome. The old man was much pleased by all he heard. He asked his young companion for the name of the great school whose habit he was wearing. The boy replied with pride that it was Christ's Hospital, but he was at home on holiday. The landlord of the inn, his father's friend, had asked him when the storm broke to perform this simple courtesy towards a stranger. The boy went on to talk about his school, and thoroughly explained its situation deep in the City, standing by Greyfriars. No school was better. It was a great pity that now, in spite of having Royal foundation, Christ's Hospital was poor and needed help. He said they had been very good to him, and that he meant to try in years to come to pay the debt when he could manage it. The old man was most pleased with his behaviour. He told the boy the great service he had rendered was not to be dishfigured by a tip; both would prefer that he should make a present to the School.

They never met again. They corresponded on rare occasions for a year or two; then the old man grew ill and ceased to write. The boy was sad and thought the old man strange, for he had never sent a single penny towards the funds of Christ's Hospital. But when the old man died his will was

found to contain a codicil expressing his profound appreciation of the willingness and the courtesy of the said boy. The codicil went on, after a brief recital of the facts, to state that having taken into full consideration the simple act of chivalry performed upon that April day deep down in Suffolk, he had decided to bestow his fortune upon the school which bred such boys as this. The fortune was not large, and I am heedless of its precise amount. What does that matter?

Few can imagine the joyful feelings which the gift aroused within the hearts not only of the Board of Governors, but in the boy—now grown up.

Toc H will never lack to do its work provided that it preserves selfless service. The obscurest unconsidered action should be done without thought of thanks of any kind. Toc H long afterwards may find reward. P.B.C.

## *George Warwick, Ordinary Seaman*

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George was one of the forty-two men killed in the action on the Yangtze River in China, a member of the crew of H.M.S. *London*.

Talbot House, the Services Club in Hong Kong, entertains the "Boys" in the ships of the Royal Navy to supper and a concert on Sunday evenings. Since last Christmas, George had been one of these and the Warden, Jim Stevens, writes of him: "One Sunday he offered me the \$2.50 for his supper. 'Never mind', I said, 'you are our guest'. His reply came proudly: 'I am now an Ordinary Seaman, not a Boy any longer; I must pay for my supper'. I accepted his money with a thankful heart. He came along to several Branch meetings before *London* sailed for the North and he had a hand in the boxes we were making for the Fanling Babies' Home. He was a most cheerful, happy and willing lad, so proud of the Navy and so full of life. We will remember him."

## Morning Coffee

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MEMBERS who are made of sterner stuff will be shocked to learn that morning coffee has become an institution at Toc H Headquarters. If they are passing in those few minutes they will be welcome to a cup (not all at one time, please!) and will find the staff swapping jests as well as 'shop' and quite often entertaining some interesting visitor. One such, a week ago, was the editor of an Australian newspaper, commended to us by the staff 'down under'. He told us that he had just been to the offices of the British Council to thank its various departments on behalf of his fellow-citizens for fine service to their city and State. The Council had provided them with a feast of the arts such as Australia had only read about or seldom experienced save at second-best before. In music they had had the Boyd-Neel Orchestra in concerts for which whole families, relieving each other in the queue, had waited in the street all night. And as a result they were now forming a symphony orchestra in their own city, for which their State had given a grant of thousands of pounds and firms and individuals were hastening forward with subscriptions. They had had a season of the Ballet Rambert, a revelation of beauty to people who had never enjoyed such an opportunity. The theatre had been packed every night to see Lawrence Olivier and Vivien Leigh in such plays as *Richard III*, acting that went far beyond anything in the repertoire of the occasional stock companies or the amateur shows to which they were accustomed. And they had seen with their own eyes collections of pictures, which hitherto they had known in reproduction only, if at all. He said that all this had been great entertainment but far more—it was now acting as a stimulus to the Australian mind, out of which new life would spring. For it all, he said, they owed an immeasurable debt to the British Council.

It is a pity that certain critics of the British Council could not have drunk coffee with us that day, though it is to be



feared that our dozen scratch cups would have run short. For there are not a few people (a London evening newspaper is a notable instance) who enjoy repeating that the British Council spends millions and produces nothing. Any day these may be expected to turn their derision also upon the Arts Council, the successor of war-time C.E.M.A., which many considered merely a 'high-brow' sister of E.N.S.A.—and *that* they often criticised as being too 'low-brow'. The truth is that, whereas many Continental nations long ago accepted, as a matter of good citizenship, the responsibility of subsidising good music, the opera, the theatre and other arts out of the taxes, we have only recently begun to follow suit on an appreciable scale. True, there are in our country plenty of national and municipal museums and galleries, a few unsurpassed in the world, many excellent and a good many lamentable. There is to be built at last, it seems, a national theatre, which has hung fire for generations, and when it stands on the South Bank of the Thames we hope to be very proud of it. But on the whole we still have the reputation abroad of being a people who combine an exaggerated love of sport with a positive dislike of 'culture', the sort of men whom Matthew Arnold eighty years ago fiercely nicknamed 'Philistines'.

### Towards Understanding

This reputation is only partly deserved. There are plenty of 'Philistines', without a doubt, in all classes today, but there is a much more widespread appreciation of 'culture' among us than there was eighty years ago. Great scholars and connoisseurs, the few but the first-rate, there have always been in this country, but now there are more and more ordinary people who are seeking to understand what these men are talking about and with them to enter and enjoy the illimitable kingdom of the fine arts. Foremost among their guides and teachers are great corporations, set up by the State and sustained with much public money, agencies like the British Council, the Arts Council and, most potent of all, the B.B.C., with its extraordinary variety of talks, discussions, criticisms and broadcast music and drama. These have abundantly proved their value both in enriching British people's stock of ideas

and in 'selling the idea' of the British People itself to other nations. Take, for a few moments only, music. England in Samuel Pepys' time—his famous diary is full of it—was still a singing and playing nation, delighting to make its own music by the fireside. A hundred years ago England had already left natural, sociable singing to the Welsh, and was contenting itself mostly with the latest music-hall song or drawing-room ballad, with a brass band at the seaside in summer. A Mendelssohn *Song without Words* on the piano might be a parlour-trick for the eldest daughter, and the only real high-light the annual performance of the *Messiah* by the local choral society. Perhaps, after all, they still made more music for themselves before the pianola, the gramophone and the wireless were born, but the scope and the knowledge of it, except to a few, was very limited indeed. Our biggest cities could not match, or even guess, the understanding of music and the talent of a German village orchestra.

#### Looking at Music

Though our nation is a nursery of poets, it may never become pre-eminently one of musicians. Yet British people are surely looking at music nowadays in a new way. So many fresh thousands of them have come to regard it no longer as an interruption to a social evening, a 'background noise' or a hobby for high-brows, but as a pleasure eagerly awaited, no more as a minor luxury but as almost a necessity for good living. Thanks very greatly to the B.B.C., they have been able to teach themselves enough about its history, its principles and practice to appreciate the different shapes it takes or to pick out the different instruments in an orchestra. They know what they like and try to discover why they like it. In this they are still very cautious and conservative; they would rather pay to hear Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony* for the twelfth time than risk two shillings on a composer they do not know. It is said that they are also without much discrimination in their applause; they clap a feeble performance on the principle of 'Don't shoot at the pianist—he's doing his best'. But look round at the rapt faces of your six thousand neighbours any night of the 'Prom.' season at the Albert Hall

in London, men and women of all classes, with many young people among them, and you cannot doubt that they love music.

Music, as the musician understands and practises it, is a highly technical and abstruse subject. But there are higher hurdles still for the ordinary man when he approaches painting. Every art and science has a vocabulary to itself, which cannot be made simple to the uninitiated, and the critics of painting are no exception; they talk a fearful jargon of their own when they attempt to tell you what is what. The plain man has not time or inclination for these intricacies, but only give him the opportunity to hear music or to see pictures and he will discover some of the values for himself. He may even discover in himself a natural taste, hitherto unsuspected—and some of the critics, for all their words, do not seem to possess that priceless gift. And so with patience, practice and affection, he may be able to find his way deeper and deeper into the mysterious beauties of sound or sight.

### Two Collections

Thanks again to the Arts Council the rare opportunity is being given just now in London of seeing two superlative collections of paintings which are never likely to be in England again. The National Gallery in Trafalgar Square, itself the permanent home of one of the noblest, though not the largest, collections in the world, is playing host for a few months to 120 of the best pictures from the gallery in Munich. For the same period the Tate Gallery on Millbank, the home of a very fine collection of modern British and French paintings (whatever the President of the Royal Academy, Sir Alfred Munnings, may have said about them on a recent convivial occasion), can offer you 200 very representative Old Masters, and much else beside, from Vienna. We ought to be proud indeed to give hospitality to such immortal treasure, which awaits the restoration of its own war-damaged galleries. Go and see these exhibitions, if you can, before they close on August 7.

For there is no way of getting to know a picture except by seeing it, if possible often and at leisure. Each art has its own way of 'getting at' us, and the more direct its path to

REMERANDI

The large Self-Portrait

(Vienna)



us the better. The art of writing is transmitted most easily of all. The poet's scribble or the novelist's typed manuscript can be put into a printed book without losing its power or changing its meaning in the least. It can thus survive a hundred or a thousand years after the author's death in exactly the form he intended and still move a million readers. Music has a harder task to reach us. Its printed notes can be read by a musician like phrases in a book, but the majority of us are total or partial illiterates where a musical score is concerned. It must therefore be translated into audible sound for us by performers—and we all know how differently two performers or two conductors can interpret the same piece. So music performed comes to us, so to speak, second-hand; it is passed by the composer to the performer and by the performer, in the way he chooses, to the listener. Furthermore, a great deal of the music to which we listen nowadays is really third-hand, transmitted by composer to performer and by him to a machine, a gramophone disc or a wireless set—and every concert-goer knows how much is lost between music heard thus indirectly and the same sound coming from the living singer or orchestra on the platform in front of him.

### Colourless Reminders

With the 'visual' arts of painting and sculpture reproduction is even less satisfactory. The most accomplished copy or engraving of a picture is but another man's laborious attempt to give you the outward form of what in the original was the upshot of a personal emotion and an individual skill. A photograph, even the best, is but a colourless reminder of the picture you have seen or would like to see; a polychrome reproduction is never absolutely true in colour and can only hint at the texture of a painting which, in most great artists, is one of the supreme delights. Hold any of the reproductions in this article in your hand as you stand in front of the picture itself, and you will see how pitifully flat and dead it is. A masterpiece of painting is a unique thing and, unlike books or sonatas, it can only be in one place at one time. For certain masterpieces the place is London and the time now. Can you be there too?



LORENZO LOTTO *Virgin and Child with St. Catherine and St. James* (Vienna)

The first high hurdle at the entrance to such an exhibition is that it all seems "far away and long ago". Purcell's music belongs to another fashion but is more intelligible to most people than Perugino's painting. Bach is not so boring to some as Botticelli. So it happens that quite a lot of visitors enter dutifully, suppressing a groan over "a lot of old Madonnas and things". A forgotten magazine had a drawing of two American tourists in a European gallery standing before a picture of St. Sebastian, and one saying "O heck, another of them darnation pin-cushions!" True, St. Sebastian was shot to death with arrows and appears full of them, again and again in Italian pictures. But you get over that hurdle when you realise the fact that Holy Church, the most generous patron of artists in those centuries, had certain rules which governed the altar-pieces it commissioned. For decency's sake the human body might not to be shown naked except in a few recognised cases—foremost, the agonised body of Christ upon the Cross, or else lying limp in His mother's lap after being

taken down—a favourite scene which the Italians called the '*Pietà*', a sacred lamentation. Then, for a body in the prime of life, they might freely depict St. Sebastian's martyrdom, and, in old age, St. Jerome, a hermit sitting in the wilderness. And as the human body and face have always been the artist's most fascinating subject, capable of every beauty and horror, full of problems of line and form, colour and light, the painters made the most of all these chances. With the female body, lovelier still, they were at first severely restricted. Only when they broke away from church pictures could they paint it under the guise of Venus, the three Graces, naked Truth or, finally, just for its own sake.

### An Endless Quest

So also the Madonna, repeated again and again on these walls, presents every type of genius with a grand subject. The eternal pair, mother and child, which belongs to every race and age and clime, is not a vain repetition in pictures but new and different with every century and from each individual mind and brush. From the young Maiden, pensive or joyful, who claims the faithful's adoration, to the proud Queen of Heaven, a pagan empress enthroned, all types of womanhood are there under the name 'Madonna'. Once realise that fact and you are on an endless quest of beauty which never repeats itself in ten thousand canvases. At first you may face the Old Masters with "How queer!" or "Why this or that?", and the answer is not always easy until one learns something of the swift, splendid flowering time of the human spirit, the Renaissance, its opening bud, its full blossom and its rich decay, the manifold time which gave us Shakespeare and Christopher Wren, and to Italy and Flanders the greatest painters of the Western World. So study is needed, as it is for literature and music, before we can catch the full fragrance with which such exhibitions as these are laden to overflowing. But long before knowledge comes, beauty has broken through.

Each art speaks to us in its own tongue, and you cannot translate music or painting or sculpture into words. So descriptions of pictures are apt to be as tiresome and useless as 'analytical notes' in a concert programme. Shall I dare to



FILIPPINO LIPPI      Madonna and Child      (Munch)

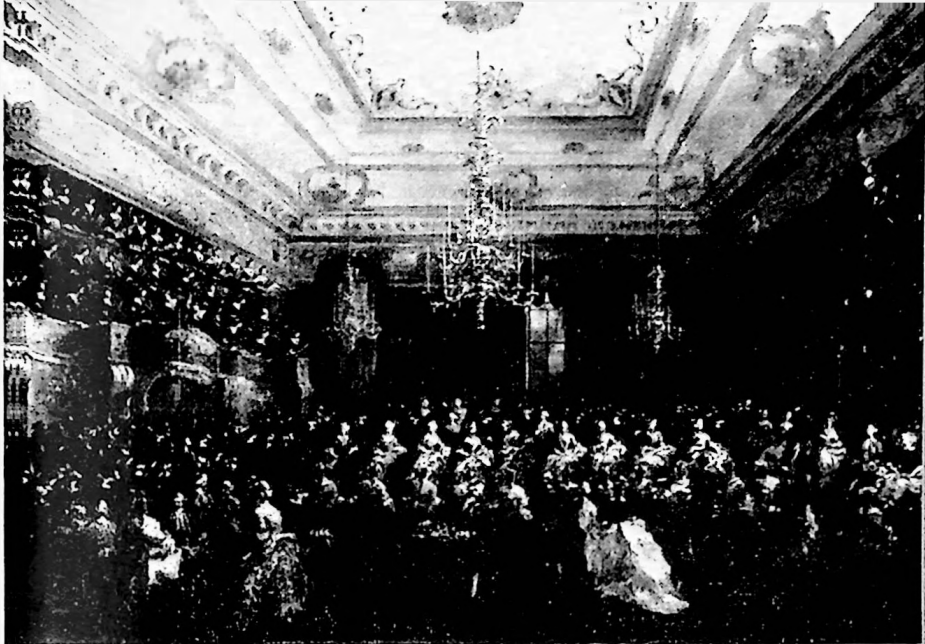


essay a very few words about four pictures only, picked not because they are the "best" (what does that mean anyway?), nor yet quite at random, from the two exhibitions?

1. *Madonna and Child*, by Filippo Lippi (National Gallery, from Munich). Giotto, the father of Italian painting, had been dead seventy years when Lippi was born in 1406. He arrived in the first flush of the Renaissance, the renewal of all art, science and learning. You may feel at first sight of this picture something conventional, crabbed and incomplete. But don't you also feel something far more heartening—the touch of dawn, the signs of Spring? The landscape background may be childish compared with the mastery of Gainsborough or the mystery of Turner (they were more than three hundred years ahead), but how charming it is, a true fairy story! You may criticise the Child's anatomy (though we are accustomed to enormously greater distortion in present-day pictures), but how compelling is the human affection of His face and gesture! And the Mother—a rather homely girl, more than a bit self-conscious, a little pert—can this be a portrait? Indeed Our Lady is Lippi's lady, painted by him as the Mother of God again and again, even as Raphael a generation later was to portray his light of love, the baker's daughter, as the Sistine Madonna. The story behind it ought not to influence our judgment of the picture as a work of art in the very least. Lucrezia Buti was a young nun in a Florentine convent, Filippo Lippi a young monk of the Carmine monastery near by. What sort of monk he was you can see in Browning's dramatic poem *Fra Lippo Lippi*, where he excuses himself to the city police who have found him wandering at night—"at an alley's end, where sportive ladies leave their doors ajar". Then he eloped with the nun Lucrezia, and such was the scandal in the town that finally the Pope himself released them both from their vows and had them married. Lippi settled down to paint religious pictures, and to become the father of a charming painter, Filippino ('Little Philip') and the teacher of a far greater artist, Sandro Botticelli, from whose hand comes a most moving picture, perhaps one of his last, a large *Pietà* in the next room.

2. *Virgin and Child with St. Catherine and St. James*, by Lorenzo Lotto (Tate Gallery, from Vienna). Here we are, a hundred years later, and the scene, the whole 'feeling', is changed. Born in Venice about 1480, Lotto is not usually reckoned the equal of the supreme giants of Venetian painting, Titian and Tintoretto, whose work is richly represented in the two largest rooms of the exhibition. Yet how this gracious picture lights up the whole room where it is hung!—beyond doubt it 'steals the party' there. No longer the young Mother and her Child alone, nor yet enthroned, as often, between solemn figures of the saints, but here at ease, seated *al fresco* upon the ground. Two unembarrassed saints kneel to greet the Child, and a youthful angel hovers near to put a wild-rose crown upon the Virgin's head. It is a type of scene, almost a holy picnic, which was becoming popular with Italian painters: they called it '*Sacra Conversazione*', a sacred 'conversation piece'. How brilliant the speedwell blue of the Virgin's ample dress, the liquid green of St. Catherine's, the glowing gold and brown of St. James's! The Child is the very 'picture of health', his Mother's face is full of quiet human happiness. St. Catherine turns her face away—she is almost certainly a portrait of a living sitter; the broken fragment of the Catherine wheel, instrument of her suffering, brings no disturbing note of tragedy into the scene. St. James the Great, traditionally a pilgrim as far afield as Spain, kneels, staff on shoulder; he has found his reward at this halting-place in the gentle look with which the Mother of God makes him welcome. How grave and lovely and young is the face of the attendant angel! Then, look deep into the landscape, no longer Lippi's nursery screen with cardboard rocks. Here are the authentic wooded valleys, the distant blue mountains, outliers of the Swiss Alps, in sight of Bergamo, where Lotto went to live and paint; a hill village, true to life, crowns the ridge underneath the angel's arm. The whole canvas, bathed in sunlight, is exhilarated by the freshness of the upland air.

3. *The large Self-Portrait*, by Rembrandt (Tate Gallery, from Vienna). Another hundred years on from Lotto, and exactly two hundred since we started, for Rembrandt, born in



FRANCESCO GUARDI    A Gala Concert in Venice    (Munich)

1606, died in 1669, and Lippi, born in 1406, in 1469. In Italy the wonderful Renaissance period had long ago reached its summit in the great Venetians and in Michelangelo at Florence, and was now rapidly going down hill from inspiration into mere cleverness. But now we have changed the scene. Here in the more prosaic North, in Holland, one of the greatest giants is at work, a dramatic poet in the use of light and shadow. Readers who remember Charles Laughton in *Rembrandt*, an old film worth reviving, will have a fair picture of the painter's career. At every stage of it he painted his own portrait—as a gay young cavalier, sword at side, wine glass in hand, and his young wife Saskia, whose face he loved to paint, upon his knee; as the stout and prosperous burgher, honoured by the city fathers of Amsterdam; as a man at various stages of growing old, getting shabbier, a trifle debauched and lined with many cares. Two young wives were dead in succession, though he had married a third time; his work had gone out of fashion and his creditors were press-

ing; before the end he was to face lawsuits, bankruptcy and the death of his only son. The decline of his fortunes, but not of his powers had begun when this portrait was painted in 1652. Sorrow and anxiety are written upon this rugged face. No words are needed to describe the picture. Look at it long, come back to it after seeing other men's work. See for yourself how the unerring mastery of his brushwork says what he wants to say: no copyist can reproduce that. If you would seek to understand his stature, go also to the National Gallery and study, among the Munich pictures, his six small canvases of the life of Christ, especially perhaps the *Deposition from the Cross*. Here you may feel that Rembrandt uses the divine key of light to open the gate of Heaven as surely as Bach uses his of sound in some moments of his Passion music.

4. *A Gala Concert in Venice*, by Francesco Guardi (National Gallery, from Munich). Yet another hundred years have gone. The Renaissance is all over. Its triumphs are a heritage which is still admired, but the tingling excitement of it has merged into the 18th century, when 'enthusiasm' was used as a term of reproach. In Venice three painters at least come out in one last flicker of the old skill, before it finally subsides into 19th century ashes. Canaletto, the best known of them, painted not only Venetian canals but Whitehall and Windsor; Guardi, with a cooler, greyer palette, also painted the scenery of his unique city and loved, like Longhi, last of the trio, to show us how its gentlefolk amused themselves. Here is a very delightful and amusing example of this taste, extremely accomplished in its execution. Mark with what sure and nervous strokes he dashes in the impression of a party in Venice to a Russian Grand Duke, the crinolines and knee-breeches, the ladies' choir and orchestra (a score of violins to one 'cello), and the sumptuous room. This is the work of a true artist. But no more Old Masters will come out of Italy.

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Goodness! How morning coffee has been spun out! You and I must hasten back to work. It will not be so hard as painting: lucky for us if it means so much and endures half as long.

BARCLAY BARON.

## We Pledge Ourselves

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*The H.A.C. of the Northern London Area, himself blind, sends this article by 'JACMAC' (JOHN R. MACDONALD) of Camberwell, Victoria, South Australia, who has been in bed for over twenty years, crippled with rheumatoid arthritis. "For almost all that time he has been like a ramrod, not one joint in his body being movable. Five years after taking to his bed he became totally blind. He has, for years, been Chairman of his unit (Macdonald Branch), which meets in his bedroom, and he is the inspiration of the show and of all who meet him".*

LET me take you back to the beginning of 1926, to a Guest Night of one of the three groups started in Melbourne by Tubby during his visit a year previously. The Jobmaster had in his innings told how men of that group had given a dozen or so war orphan lads a week's holiday at a seaside camp. He felt that the job was not properly done if contact with the boys began and ended with the week spent together once a year during the holiday season, so he asked for volunteers, if possible one for each lad, who would act as big brothers and keep in touch with the lads by visiting them regularly in their homes throughout the year. This challenge struck home with a young chap who was present as a visitor, and after the meeting he went to the Jobmaster and somewhat nervously suggested trying himself out as a big brother. Thus Toc H gained a new member, and for this young chap began associations which have greatly enriched his life. As you have probably guessed, I was the young fellow, and I may add the Jobmaster was Ern. Putland whom I then met for the first time. Through the subsequent years, 'Putt' has remained the truest and most steadfast of friends, and in the changing circumstances of my life has always encouraged me to attempt new ventures in service. I recount this story as it sets the background for what I have to say. I would emphasize that the thoughts which I express are the result of much observation and study of Toc H, combined with a long practical experience in striving to build Toc H within my own life and within the life of a Branch.

It seems to me that there are three things which form the pillars upon which Toc H is built. Those three things are:—

1. The Ceremony of Light, which provides us with the inspiration, the remembrance of unselfish sacrifice inspiring us to unselfish service.
2. The Main Resolution, which lays down for us the fundamental principles to which we are pledged.
3. The Toc H Prayer, which gives us the spirit and attitude of mind with which we enter into all our activities.

Let me repeat these three, the Ceremony of Light providing inspiration; the Main Resolution, setting out the fundamental principles; and the Toc H prayer giving the spirit. I feel that any man who takes the trouble to get a fair understanding of these three simple things must gain a good grasp of the meaning and purpose of Toc H. Hence I would urge all Toc H members, and especially those who are new, to make themselves thoroughly familiar with these three things, committing them to memory and taking time to ponder on them. In my experience I have found that most Toc H men know the Ceremony of Light, quite a fair proportion can repeat the Toc H Prayer, but far too few can state accurately the Main Resolution, so it is to the Main Resolution that I would like to direct your thoughts.

I have found it very helpful to turn it over from time to time in my mind, and I never fail to wonder at what a complete and concise statement it is, and what a wealth of meaning is contained in so many of its words and phrases. Now I should like to try and express the thoughts which the Main Resolution stirs within me.

“Remembering with gratitude”, not just “remembering” but “remembering with gratitude”, which surely implies a sense of obligation, a feeling that we owe something, that we have something to repay. “...how God used the Old House”. We should notice the special significance of the words “God used”; it doesn’t say how Tubby Clayton and others used the Old House, but how “God used the Old House”. Here we come very close to the heart of Toc H. It gives us the key to Toc H, the secret of its strength and power. Toc H must always be an instrument which God

can use, a means through which He works. If the words "God used" were omitted Toc H would soon degenerate into just another organisation, and would quickly lose its vitality. So it is useful at times to ask ourselves if God is using our H.Q.s, our Branch meeting room, and is He using you and me?

Then follows what I would call the two underlying purposes of all our Toc H activities. I call them "underlying" for their influence is more indirect than direct. We don't have to talk about them a great deal, nor to use them as slogans, yet all our activities whether in meetings or on jobs must be so planned as to contribute something towards those two purposes. The first underlying purpose is to "bring home to men that behind the ebb and flow of things temporal stand the eternal realities". "The ebb and flow of things temporal" recalls to our minds the conditions under which Toc H had its birth. The material existence of Talbot House at Poperinghe was never very secure. It stood within the sound of guns, and from time to time came under intermittent shell fire, and on occasions sustained minor damage. Then there was the flow of many thousands of men passing through Poperinghe on their way to the front line, and stopping for a while at Talbot House, and knowing within themselves that many of their number would not pass that way again. There was also the ebb of many thousands of men returning from a spell in the front line, resting for a period at Talbot House, and carrying in their minds the thoughts of comrades whom they had left behind. Talbot House watched the ebb and flow of men, and observed the ever-increasing host of those who went in in the full strength and vigour of manhood but who did not come back, or else returned broken in body. Truly in and around the Old House "the ebb and flow of things temporal" seemed a grim reality. It is when the margin of security in life is narrowed that men are most ready to turn towards those things which cannot be shaken, and to seek to lay hold on the "eternal realities". Under more normal conditions the course of life never flows smoothly for any great length of time, and we are always receiving jolts which disturb our hopes and plans. So for us, "the ebb and flow

of things temporal" may just simply be the ups and downs of life which come to each one of us.

What are the "Eternal Realities"? They are surely those things which do not change, the things which are enduring, which are abiding. The word "abiding" suggests to us the words of St. Paul "And now abideth faith, hope and love". The greatest spiritual forces of faith, hope and love may represent for us the eternal realities, so in Toc H it is for us to show forth to men that the spiritual forces of faith, hope and love persist and operate unchanged and undiminished through all the ups and downs of life. This is something which can only be achieved over an extended period of time. It is probably most manifest in a certain steadfastness in our attitude towards life.

The second underlying purpose is contained in the words "to send men forth strengthened to fight at all costs for the setting up of His Kingdom upon earth". This sounds very imposing, and there are many men who are not quite sure just how far they can commit themselves to it. In addition, many of us have no very clear idea in our minds as to what we mean by the "setting up of His Kingdom on earth", and among those who do have a clear idea we should probably find that to different men it means different things. I therefore sometimes use an alternative statement of our purpose. "To send men forth strengthened in their endeavours to make a better job of living", and if we have a true conception of the real job of living, I believe it will amount to much the same thing as the "setting up of His Kingdom upon earth". However, it may be sufficient to state our purpose as "to send men forth strengthened", that is, strengthened in every way, but it is necessary that we hold in mind that no man can be strengthened in any way unless primarily he is strengthened with the might of the Spirit in the inner man. So we may state the two underlying purposes as "To bring home to men that behind the ebb and flow of things temporal stand the eternal realities" and "to send men forth strengthened".

Thus far the Main Resolution consists of a sort of prelude or introduction which forms the background against which is set the pledge which follows, and so we pledge ourselves "to



strive". I always feel I want to underline heavily the words "to strive". If they were omitted I feel I could not affirm the declaration with any great degree of confidence. It is within the power of every man to strive, and no man can be earnest and sincere in anything he undertakes unless he strives. The three points of the pledge (1) "To listen now and always for the voice of God"; (2) "to know His will revealed in Christ"; (3) "to do it fearlessly" are quite straightforward and need no elaboration. It is worth noting how all-embracing they are. They take in the whole of life, and there is something very positive in "to *listen*, to *know* and to *do*". There is nothing negative or passive about them, and they set no limits to the range of our interests and activities. In a strange way, our pledge is both a maximum and a minimum; no man can do more than this, and Toc H cannot ask less.

Then follows a qualifying phrase which amplifies "to do it fearlessly", especially the word "fearlessly". "Reckoning nothing of the world's opinion or its successes for ourselves or this our family". It is not easy to express precisely in words all that is implied in the phrase. We do not do things just because we feel they will be approved by others, nor are we deterred from doing things because we know they will incur the disapproval of people. We do a thing because we feel within ourselves that it is the right thing to do. The sureness and confidence with which we can do this will be determined entirely by our faithfulness to the first two points of the pledge "to listen to the voice of God" and "to know His will".

This fine declaration comes to a fitting conclusion with the Four Points of the Compass, which have come to be so generally used as a simple explanation of what Toc H means for us. "... and towards this end: To think fairly; To love widely; To witness humbly; To build bravely."

The Four Points of the Compass make up a set of simple guiding rules which we can conveniently carry about with us and which point out to us the way in which we may journey through life in the true spirit of Toc H. 'JACMAC'.

## *Multum in Parvo*

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- ✠ QUEEN MARY will attend the Service of Renewal on July 14, when the North Aisle of ALL HALLOWS is re-opened.
- ✠ Congratulations to Padre PAUL WEBB, Commissioner, Toc H North-West Europe, on being appointed M.B.E.
- ✠ BARKIS expects to leave with his wife for Mombasa in November. In March, April and May next year he will be visiting Toc H in Rhodesia and South Africa.
- ✠ JACK SHAW has returned from his year's travels in New Zealand and will be going to Scotland to work with ANGUS JOHNSTON.
- ✠ BOB PURDY is leaving Scotland to become East Midlands Area Secretary when HAROLD GASCOIGNE goes from Leicester to be Area Secretary in Queensland, Australia.
- ✠ The Rev. JOHN S. MUST, Vicar of Longford, Coventry, joins the staff in September and will become Warden of a Toc H conference and training centre in London.
- ✠ The Rev. SYDNEY G. PICKLES, of Almondbury, Huddersfield, is to be appointed to the Carver Chaplaincy in Hull and will be going to the East Yorkshire Area after September.
- ✠ Congratulations to PAUL and EVA SLESSOR on their Golden Wedding on June 14th.
- ✠ The announcement in May of the engagement between FRANK CARDEW and PEGGY PATERSON gives cause both for hearty congratulations and for a tribute to Frank, who in war and peace for more than ten years has been the mainstay of the Mark in CALCUTTA.
- ✠ Members visiting the ROYAL SHOW at SHREWSBURY, July 5 to 8, are asked to take their friends to the Toc H Stall in the Y.M.C.A. marquee.
- ✠ There is a very great need for reading matter for the troops in the FAR EAST. At the suggestion of Gordon Lawes, who has been visiting troops serving in the jungle, Toc H has been

asked to co-operate in the collection of suitable books, magazines, etc. They should be marked "FARELf from Toc H" and sent to The Secretary, Council of Voluntary War Work, 92 Gloucester Place, London, W.1. They will be shipped at public expense to Singapore.

❧ From the minutes of an Area Executive, the names alone being fictitious: "Apologies had been received from Henry Garland, who had gone down with a dose of malaria and Sid Worry."

❧ From a Branch Log: "I.J. said he thought we ought to ask Headquarters for a full statement of accounts and a properly-audited balance sheet. Joe pointed out that these appeared in the Toc H JOURNAL for April. Unfortunately, we do not have any Journals in this Branch."

❧ *There will not be an August number of the JOURNAL, the next issue being published in September.*

## Sunday 'Special'

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"Have you ever tried to get from Alloa to Bridge of Earn? You have? Then you'll understand why so many people along the hill-foots of the Ochils are full of gratitude to the Alloa branch of Toc H.

They are people who have relatives or friends in Bridge of Earn hospital. The weekly visit used to mean a whole day's travelling, hours wasted waiting for connections. Two years ago Alloa Toc H decided this was a call they must answer. They began to run a special bus every Sunday to take the visitors to hospital and bring them home again.

So every Sunday for two years the bus has left Alloa at 12.45 p.m., picked up its passengers at various places en route and delivered them safely at Bridge of Earn. Not even snow and frost have kept it from getting through.

But Alloa Toc H don't merely provide the bus. Some of their members travel with it every week, paying their own fares, to visit patients whose own friends can't come. What a grand service!"—*Sunday Post* (Scotland), 14.5.49.

# The Open Hustings

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## An Oliver Twist?

Dear Mr. Barkis:

Being willing, as you indicated at the Council meeting, to receive letters, would you allow me to underline a suggestion, also at the Council meeting, which seemed to me to be almost an aside and therefore likely to be overlooked? It was a suggestion which must receive the complete support of every member of Toc H. Hugh Lyon said it was high time that the Founder Padre completed the story begun in *Tales of Talbot House*. I am confident that every single one of us will be most anxious to know the publication date of *Tales of Toc H* from Tubby's pen. This year, next year, sometime—?

Kent.

WILKINS MICAWBER.

## Concern for Children

DEAR EDITOR,

Recently I heard one of the greatest experts in the country speak to a small audience on the subject of deprived children, and I realised for the first time the size of the problem and how little Toc H as a whole knows about it. I suggested to our District Secretary that we ought to hear our local Children's Officer, and find out what, if anything, we could do locally. The District Team together with representatives of the Women's Section held a special meeting to hear a talk by the Children's Welfare Officer for Harrow. We learned from her that the greatest need is for more foster-parents. (Toc H as a body cannot do anything about this, but perhaps some members and their wives might consider it). Our concern should be for those for whom foster-parents have not been found, who are very well cared for materially, but who lack personal love and a feeling of security. ("Deprived" children is not a good term. Few of them are orphans, but nearly all are victims of broken homes.) I know that Toc H in some places has been quietly doing good work for many years, often

in co-operation with voluntary Children's Homes, but I feel we should be concerned about the welfare of children as we have in the past about such matters as housing, and I would like to suggest that all Districts should try to get to know their Children's Officer, and find out what they can do locally. The address can always be obtained from the Children's Care Dept. of the County Council.

*Pinner, Mx.*

TOM DENT.

### Ourselfs and the Public

DEAR EDITOR,

Why isn't our movement catching-on? There are many reasons, but I'd content myself with three very practical ones.

(1) The TOC H JOURNAL. (Sorry Ed., but if you don't like it you needn't print it.) If the JOURNAL was prominently displayed in its present form I doubt if anybody, outside members, would even give it a second glance. In my Branch it's quite a job to attract sixpence out of a member's pocket, in fact you can't always give it away.

What about a good serial story; what about a few jokes and competitions; what about some news and a bit of sport? Mix that in with some of its excellent articles; make it a real everybody's mag., then sell it. Let it be displayed in shop windows alongside *John Bull*, the *Tatler*, and the *Daily Worker*. Let's use our JOURNAL to spread the word 'ToC H'.

(2) The Guestnight. Let's have some good old army discipline. Start on time; know what's happening: something a bit different; organise a few experiments like holding a Guestnight in the 'local'; try a skittle-match, be topical, and don't be afraid to advertise.

(3) Membership. This is our best hope of all. Members, face the facts of life; laugh by all means, but don't hit your head on the clouds... We don't want sky-gazers, we want *men*. Remember ToC H is not something you plant in somebody, it's already there just like a man's soul, however thick the crust. So, ToC H members, walk out into the Public Eye and play the game of life with four rules only: "To think fairly, to love widely, to witness humbly and to build bravely." *Street, Somerset.*

A. BEAVEN.

## Bingham's Story

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BINGHAM, Nottinghamshire, is a village with a population of only 1,800; but it possesses some big-hearted inhabitants and recently leapt into the news as a result of their vision and enterprise.

Our story begins at the meeting-place of the local Boy Scouts when, during a game of 'hop-and-barge', one of the boys in his enthusiasm put his foot through the floor. This had happened before and numerous patches marked the spots, for the floor after years of yeoman service was past its best.

At the next meeting of Troop Officers and Parents, the Scoutmaster suggested that, in view of the state of the floor, it would be advisable to seek other accommodation. The matter was duly discussed; but apart from suggesting a visit to the Town and Country Planning office in order to find out if any provision for youth was contemplated in the near future, nothing was done.

### Birth of an Idea

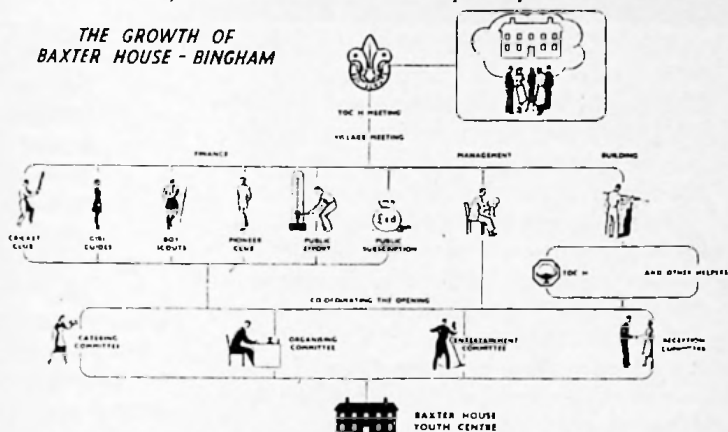
But something happened which offered a way out of the difficulty. Mrs. Mackay, as she walked across the Market Place with Nev. Jacques and Eric Green, suggested that a property, owned by her father Mr. Baxter, might possibly be used to solve the problem. The two men, both members of Toc H Bingham, discussed the matter and decided that, although the property was in a terrible state of repair, it had possibilities. Bearing in mind that the Branch were in desperate need of accommodation of any kind for youth work, they agreed to put the idea before the members, and did so at the next Toc H meeting.

Although the difficulties were numerous, the Branch felt that the need of Bingham's youth was so great that these problems should not be allowed to stand in the way. Mention must be made here of Nev. Jacques. He was fully aware of the difficulties and hard work involved, but was amongst the most enthusiastic advocates in favour of the scheme and

became the most ardent worker in its application. The Branch decided to give its meeting-nights over to the work of preparation, and the owners of the property promised to give every assistance.

The plans were drawn up by an old friend of the Branch and presented at the next meeting and then at a special meeting of the Officers and Parents of the scouts. The meeting was told of the ideas and suggestions of the Toc H Branch and agreed that, with the special qualifications possessed by their members, backing and blessing should be given to the venture. The local Council was then approached, and promised to do all in their power to expedite matters. The scheme was duly presented in Council and the plan accepted. Meantime, a Branch member suggested that he should make a film of the job, and this was subsequently done.

### THE GROWTH OF BAXTER HOUSE - BINGHAM



It was felt that opportunity should be given to all sections of the community to share in the work, and a meeting was called to solicit the help of all. The meeting was an unqualified success, and responded with suggestions and promises to notify their own committees. The raising of a sum of £400 was set as a target and this was reached within three months, over three quarters of the amount being obtained by the different local organisations, especially the Girl Guides, and the balance by public subscriptions.



*Bingham's Youth Centre is opened by the Duke of Rutland*

### Constitution

The matter of Trusteeship was considered, and it was decided, as it was desirable for the building when completed to be the property of the village, to have the deeds invested in the names of four Toc H members, and not to invest them in any definite organisation, thus facilitating the transfer to a public body when the time was opportune.

It was decided to form two committees—one to be known as the General Representative Body, who were to be called together from time to time and acquainted with the progress of the scheme and to help in matters of raising funds to finance the work; the second to be called the Building Committee, and to be responsible for the actual work, the obtaining of licences, etc.

### On the Job

Only those who have taken part in demolishing an old building can fully appreciate the amount of dirt and dust associated with such work, and the uninitiated soon realised why men engaged in this sort of job drink pints and pints of whatever it might be. Fortunately, Mrs. Jacques and her helpers realised this too, and supplied generous quantities of tea, a permit having been obtained.



The first job was the clearing away of the old tub lavatories (something which only lives in the imaginations of many folk), and the pulling-down process occupied a considerable amount of time. On one occasion seventeen people turned up to do their bit, including the lady who first made the offer. Before finishing work each evening everything had to be tidied up, the roadway had to be swept clear of debris; this proved to be quite an obstacle to rapid progress.

The team spirit was remarkable and although fellows gave up football and cricket to do the work, they were to a large extent compensated by the fine feeling that prevailed. The only accident of any note occurred to the man least expected, the Clerk of Works, Nev. He tumbled from the first floor during the demolition and fell on a five-inch steel chisel. He spent the next few days in bed considering himself a very lucky man for escaping so lightly. Then, after the horse had gone, the committee locked the stable door and took out an insurance policy.

The working party soon fell into line. Each evening's work was planned ahead, and was dealt with section by section. All useable bricks were stacked ready for cleaning, all rubble was heaped, and it was arranged with local farmers to fetch it away for filling in their gateways. Girders and window frames had to be 'scrounged'. Each night was 'Amami Night' to rid the workers of the fine brick dust and real filth. Those working on the job, who had rarely lifted anything heavier than a pen or cricket bat, soon found their hands getting as hard as iron—blisters were soon things of the past, and they became fully-fledged builder's labourers.

### Ways and Means

It was not possible to get timber, so concrete floors had to be put in; the concrete was mixed in a builder's yard, fifty yards away, wheeled up to the building and taken upstairs in buckets. As each floor had to be completed in an afternoon it meant that two or three fellows had to work until midnight.

A retired carpenter became a real stalwart. Every day found him there, and all the woodwork, doors and cupboards were undertaken and completed by him. The electric wiring was



*The opening ceremony, viewed from the rear*

supervised by a local electrician. The local plumber, one of the Toc H Trustees, looked after the plumbing, ably assisted by an apprentice, also a Toc H member.

The decorator, also a Trustee and an ardent cricket fan, promised to carry out the decorating in the off-cricket season, and give all the help he could in the evenings. This promise was kept, and with the help of two or three of his friends, the decorating proceeded in good style. All this time Nev. kept the job moving. He was tireless and an inspiration to everyone.

### Open House

As the job proceeded, the Committee met at regular intervals, and at last came the time for the Opening to be planned. This was carried through in the same efficient and thorough manner that characterised the rest of the undertaking, and the job's culmination might well be summed-up in the following News Bulletin:

"Tomorrow the Duke of Rutland will open a new Youth Centre at Bingham, Nottinghamshire, which has been built on the site of derelict property by the efforts of Toc H after many months of personal effort. The Branch has among its members a forman builder, a bricklayer, a master-plumber and a decorator, and these formed the spearhead of the attack, enlisting a working party of up to seventeen. All the Youth organisations of Bingham are combining to celebrate the successful conclusion of a grand piece of self-help."

*B.B.C., Midland Regional News, 20.5.49.*

## *The Elder Brethren*

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BARTON.—On April 14, IAN C. BARTON, aged 34, a member of Heaton Moor Branch; formerly Stockport District Secretary. Elected 18.3.'35.

BOSOMWORTH.—On May 8, EDWARD PALLISEN BOSOMWORTH ('SPAR'), aged 55, a member of Gateshead Branch. Elected 3.11.'34.

BRIDGES.—On May 24, ARTHUR BRIDGES, aged 63, a member of the R.H.H.I. Branch, Putney. Elected 28.10.'47.

COOK.—On February 4, BERTRAM JAMESON EDGAR COOK, a member of the R.H.H.I. Branch, Putney. Elected 28.10.'47.

ELLIS.—On March 25, GERALD ELLIS, formerly a member of Oxford Branch. Elected 1.1.'38.

HORSEY.—On May 16, ALBERT HORSEY, aged 61, a member of Broadstairs Branch. Elected 13.1.'37.

LOCK.—On May 24, DANIEL LOCK ('DAN'), aged 82, a member of Beckenham Branch. Elected 6.12.'45.

ROGERS.—On May 18, JOSEPH SHEPARD ROGERS ('POP'), aged 72, the late Pilot of Edmonton Branch. Elected 29.11.'33.

SHENTON.—In April, JAMES E. SHENTON, aged 75, a member of Minster-in-Sheppey Branch. Elected 14.1.'47.

STONE.—On May 22, GEORGE STONE, aged 69, a member of Hythe Branch. Elected 3.5.'46.

## *Poperinghe Pilgrimages*

Toc H has been fortunate in securing a limited amount of Belgian currency, which can be used only by members making a pilgrimage to the Old House.

Not more than £4 per member (which should be ample for a week-end), can be applied for.

Applications should be sent to Paul Slessor at 47 Francis Street, S.W.1, without delay, bearing in mind that some vacancies for the August Bank Holiday pilgrimage are still available.

## Far Cry

*In this short article, the Overseas Secretary gives news from far-away places in three continents.*

### A Goldmine in Brazil

One of the reasons why Toc H is generally thrusting forward into the post-war world is that, while keeping a tight-grip on principles, it has the knack of adjusting itself to circumstance. Take the Morro Velho group for instance. Morro Velho is a mine alongside Nova Lima in Brazil. Until the Brazilians themselves can be won for Toc H (the group now has two Brazilian members, a Brazilian probationer and Danish 'Builder'), it draws its members from the English and Anglo-Brazilian community attached to the mine. That means about eighty families, and roughly eighty husbands—the total public available to support a Toc H unit some seventeen strong. That in itself is illuminating. What about the problem of speakers in such a small community, 300 miles from the three or four old members in Rio de Janeiro? They know each other's voices and views as well as they know each other's lives, very well indeed. When a Brazilian is the speaker the whole meeting, except for the Ceremony of Light, is conducted in Portuguese. Although the Padre is an Anglican, the Roman Catholic priest is genuinely interested in Toc H, and sometimes comes to meetings and has himself taken appropriate family prayers at the end.

It may sound trivial, but in the circumstances the one steady job is the provision of entertainment by which the group augments the social activities sponsored by the mine. *Quiet Week-end*, for instance, was a great success, attended and apparently enjoyed by practically the whole of 'the European community', and also a sprinkling of Brazilians to whom both dialogue and plot were utterly incomprehensible. The little Brazilian maid of the secretary and his wife had never seen a play before, and she was thrilled to go. Afterwards she was asked about it: "Had she understood any of the words?" "Oh no". Had she understood what it was all about? "Oh no". Had she then enjoyed it?—"Oh yes, indeed". The proceeds of these entertainments go to local Brazilian charities.



*Nova Lima, Brazil*

David Finlay, the new secretary, recently suggested that instead of distributing the money by post, it would be better to invite representatives of the charities to a group meeting.

Each could then describe his work for five minutes, and the cheques could be handed over slightly ceremonially. The meeting was of course conducted in Portuguese. One of the guests was a delightful woman, rather elderly, who was not only the mother of fourteen children, but also no less than the representative of the Sociedade para Proteçao de Maternidade e Infância de Nova Lima: it gave food and clothes to poor Brazilian children.

Another, a man, was an enthusiastic evangelist of the fundamental school. He voyaged up the rivers by canoe, teaching a simple Christian faith to the children in the villages with pictures and diagrams. His fervour was reflected in his talk and an atmosphere of apprehension was noticeable, for the other guests held very varied but also strong religious convictions. An explosion was feared but never occurred: which is also a matter of interest and speculation.

The odd thing is that although the mining background of Morro Velho, the rocky background of Gibraltar and the Wiltshire background of Chippenham are so unlike each other, all three units have discovered by letter that they share much the same sort of problems.

Which only goes to show how marked is the family likeness.

## The Sudan

In January the Khartoum group held its Annual New Year's Dinner, proceeded by a service in the Gordon Chapel of the Cathedral. The service was taken by the Provost, the Very Rev. G. H. Martin.

The Bishop of the Sudan is an old friend of Toc H, and in proposing a toast to the Founder Padre he recalled the time when, waking one morning in the Old House at Poperinghe during the Great War, he found a plate of bacon and eggs beside his head. Four years later he received a note from Tubby, then trying to start Toc H in England, signed "The man who cooked your breakfast in Pop. in 1915".

The last toast was proposed by the Provost—"the cook and servants of the Clergy House, and in particular to the head cook". The reply from Sid Ahmed was made in Arabic and had to be interpreted. Mixed hockey, with two riding crops and a tennis ball as utensils, seems to have found the women guests in as violently good form as the men. This year the home units represented were fewer than usual—Tottenham, Croydon, Oldham and Barrow-in-Furness.

Bishop Gelsthorpe took family prayers at the end of a friendly and highly entertaining evening.

Toc H in Khartoum would be the first to acknowledge the debt they owe to various Diocesan Clergy. The sort of niche they occupy in the life of the Diocese may perhaps be gauged by the fact that Archdeacon ("Uncle") Harper has been known to receive letters addressed quite simply to "Uncle, The Sudan".

## Australian Scouting Record

Here is a record of the men and women members of Toc H in the Denmark Branch, South Australia. It is culled from the April number of "The Link", the Toc H Journal of Australia.

GROUP SCOUTMASTER: Padre H. R. Ballard.

SCOUTMASTER: I. M. Kennedy.

LADY CUBMASTER: Mrs. M. Matthews.

ASSISTANT CUBMASTER: Miss B. Freeman.

INSTRUCTORS & EXAMINERS: W. Board (stamps); J. Hooking and C. Wood (Ambulance) and H. Fisher (Electrician).

In addition, from the women's section Miss H. Weir is a Guide Lieutenant and Miss M. Millar an Examiner.

## *The Younger End*

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RECENTLY Perry Bar has had a night out and a night in, which are worthy of note. After the Headmaster of Birmingham Blue Coat School had given the Branch a talk, members discussed with him how to help his boys when they left school. As a start, they accepted his invitation to hold a Branch meeting in the School itself.

The boys gave members a hearty welcome, and settled down at once to show them their stamp collections and so on. Members introduced themselves by their nick-names and the tale of how they got them: 'Rheumy' (his real name is Gout) specially tickled their sense of humour. Then the officers described their jobs in turn, giving out their notices as at a normal meeting. 'Light' was taken, after explanation, and the boys were very still and much impressed. In the sing-song that followed it was plain that schoolboys know their camp-songs better than Toc H members.

The Branch Chairman gave a short talk on the story of Toc H and its Lamp, and some questions were asked at the end. Boys seemed to be chewing it all over and some letters from them are expected later. Meanwhile two of them have been taken to the West Midlands Area Festival. It is hoped that none will forget the Pilot's offer of friendship from Toc H if they need it at any time in later life.

Two days later the Branch invited boys from the local company of the Boys' Brigade to its hut for the evening, and during the evening initiated the B.B. Captain as a member. A games night was staged in which every Toc H member played a B.B. lad at a different game with a different partner. It was grand fun and it laid foundations for recruitment to Toc H membership in the future, if the contact is maintained.

Here is a two-way traffic of man and boy which, repeated in every Toc H unit, might have large consequences in the years to come.

## *Just a Tramp*

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AT a Bishop Auckland District guestnight a few months ago I met, after some years, grey-haired Captain Bennett, M.B.E., Housemaster of Chilton Hall. He had brought half a dozen of his lads with him as guests, and they all looked as if they were enjoying the evening. They were not particularly smart in their dress and some of them didn't look very fit—for all of them had been 'on the road' and not long before we met were spending their nights in 'the spike' (casual ward) after long day's tramping. For Chilton Hall in Co. Durham, taking the place of Windlestone Hall when that was requisitioned by the War Office in 1939, is a home for such guests, run by the Wayfarers' Benevolent Association. What that is members of Heckmondwike Branch in Yorkshire could have told you in the 1920's at first-hand, for they co-operated with the Association's founder, the late J. T. Gibbons, at Spring House in their town.

### A Moving Record

Over ten years ago Captain Bennett told his own story in a little book, *Just a Tramp*, which has long been out of print. I am very glad to say that it is now available again in a new edition (Epworth Press 2s. 6d.), for it is very well worth reading. For nine months Bennett himself had been 'on the road', down and out, just a tramp, when he collapsed in winter weather on the Yorkshire moors and spent three months in the workhouse infirmary, and there he made the contact which put him in his present job, for which he is supremely fitted. That is eighteen years ago, but the stories he has to tell of his mates on the road and his own experience of that life live freshly in his pages today. It is a moving record, full of the



tragedy and even comedy in the lives of homeless men. We may be glad of the one reference to 'Toc H. Speaking of the hopeless dreariness of Sunday in casual wards, he writes :



*"The world forgetting, by the world forgot"*

"Just lately some of the wards have been brightened by visits from the local members of 'Toc H. This is much appreciated, as, somehow or other, 'Toc H seems to breed just that right feeling of fellowship without snobbery . . . Many people have had such a forbidding reception in a tramp ward that very few people, with the exception of 'Toc H, ever go near them."

Do the casual wards still need our friendship? Is it still in action there?

B.B.

## An Intimate Record

*Broken Images.* By John Guest. (Longmans, Green & Co., 10s. 6d.).

There are many examples in English literature of personal diaries, journals and letters written in the first instance for private purposes, later becoming available to a wider circle, and enjoyed by many readers for the sheer merit of their writing. Such a book is Mr. John Guest's newly published *Broken Images*.

During the war Mr. Guest, like so many of his countrymen, found himself a temporary soldier and his journal, written mainly in exercise books, was posted off in instalments as he wrote them to "C.V.W." an intimate friend. His five years' service in Ack-ack batteries commenced as a recruit at Sevenoaks, and before it ended at Woolwich, travel had taken him through England, Scotland and Wales, and thence to Tunisia and Italy.

The writer accepted his military obligations but felt that he had lost control of his own life, and resented "this stealing of one's vigorous years". A great admirer of T. S. Eliot, he quotes from "The Waste Land":

What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow  
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,  
You cannot say, or guess, for you know only  
A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,  
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,  
And the dry stone no sound of water.

Later, in Italy, he became a captain and began to realise that his own unexpected capacity to command men had helped him to shed "nervousness and a host of instabilities" and to view life from a more extrorse angle. He writes:

"One thing I am coming to realise (rather late in life) is that countries *are* like the conglomerate impression one gets from the work of their artists. Do you remember those fantastic little stone towns perched on the tops of hills in the backgrounds of paintings by so many Italian masters (the Umbrian School), and the winding, shining rivers, and the rocks, and those slender black trees with the round bunches of foliage that are so often silhouetted against skies of infinite depth and clarity? All these are actually here and can be seen. The paintings of those masters was far, far less stylised than ever I dreamed."

The writer feels that in all the changes and disintegration wrought by war, "the things which will survive are the perfectly self-contained things—you can't put Bach or Shakespeare into concentration camps—and these things, and our personal relationships, will be valuable salvage..." The note of introspection which runs throughout the journal is balanced by a keen sensitivity to natural beauty and an ability to convey authentic atmosphere in a few words, which combine to make the reading of *Broken Images* a memorable experience.

F.G.C.

## *Hospital Libraries*

THE MATRON of Guy's Hospital, Miss Smith, speaking recently to hospital librarians on "Voluntary Workers in the Hospital Service today" said that although the State might supply the necessities of the service, it remained to the voluntary workers to provide the 'luxuries' which gave so much comfort and encouragement to the patients. From long experience, she knew the value of a well organised hospital library, and the voluntary workers in the hospitals today were carrying on the traditions of the volunteer workers of the past. There was a saying at Guy's, "You must put more into the hospital than you take out of it", but the work was not entirely without reward. There was a great satisfaction in helping others, and the courage and cheerfulness of the patients was both a lesson and an inspiration.

Later, at a business meeting of the Guild of Hospital Librarians, it was reported that a deputation consisting of representatives of the Guild and the Library Association had met a representative of the Ministry of Health to discuss the future of hospital libraries under the National Health Scheme. As a memorandum had been issued previously by the Ministry recognising the importance of voluntary service and in particular the work of hospital libraries the deputation was concerned chiefly with aspects of organisation and the supply of books.

A report, which was issued after the discussion, stated that the Ministry had agreed that the normal source of supply of

books and professional services should be the appropriate library authority supplemented by voluntary workers, and that a memorandum should be sent to Hospital Management Committees recommending them to approach the library authorities with a view to working out jointly a scheme for service. The Ministry agreed to use its influence to see that good provision was made for hospital libraries in existing and future buildings.

The Guild of Hospital Libraries is an independent organisation which unites both voluntary and professional librarians, and would welcome new members. The Guild's quarterly publication, *The Book Trolley*, enables all those interested in hospital libraries to keep in touch with the latest developments in the service. Further details can be obtained by writing direct to the Hon. Secretary, Miss Joan Cloke, F.L.A., Central Library, Broadway, Bexley Heath, Kent. J.C.

### *Wanted—a Play*

*The British Weekly* of June 9 announced that it would give a prize of £100 "for the best full-length play, unpublished and not professionally produced at the closing date of the competition, dealing with a contemporary situation in a Christian way". It emphasised to intending competitors that it was looking for "a play for the theatre and not the church"; "indeed the best work can probably be done by demonstrating Christian ideas in action rather than by too much talk about them". The British Drama League has agreed to associate itself with the competition and every effort will be made to arrange for the winning play to be performed in a London theatre. Details of the competition can be obtained from the editor of the *British Weekly*, 11 Buckingham Street, London, W.C.2.

Now the job of Toc H is surely always that of "dealing with a contemporary situation in a Christian way" and "demonstrating Christian ideas in action rather than by too much talk about them". Have we among our membership no playwrights who can 'put across', not the name of Toc H, but the ideas for which it stands in dramatic form which is one of the finest means of moving other men to thought and action?